

• If You Encounter A Bear

Do not run. Bears can run faster than 30 mph (50 km/h), even faster than Olympic sprinters. Running is likely to elicit a predatory chase response from an otherwise non-aggressive bear. If the bear is unaware of you, detour away from it. Give the bear plenty of room, allowing it to continue its own activities undisturbed. If the bear is aware of you but has not acted aggressively, back away slowly while keeping an eye on the bear, talk in a calm, firm voice while slowly waving your arms above your head. These actions will help the bear confirm that you are a human and not a prey animal. Grizzly bears do not normally prey on humans. A bear that stands up on its hind legs is not acting aggressively, but is curious and is trying to identify you. Help it out by following the above guidelines. Scientific evidence clearly indicates that when given the opportunity most bears will avoid humans.

• If A Bear Approaches or Charges You

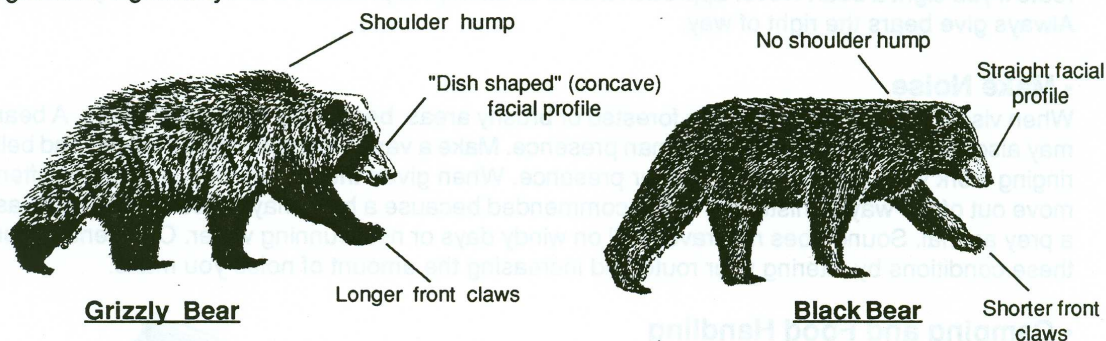
Do not run; do not drop your pack. A pack can help protect your body in case of an attack. Dropping a pack may encourage the bear to approach humans for food in the future. Most charges are bluffs, sometimes coming to within 10 feet (3 meters) of a person before stopping or veering off. Stand still until the bear stops and has moved away, then slowly back off. Due to the small size of the trees in the sub-arctic, climbing a tree may not provide protection.

• If A Grizzly Bear Attacks

The grizzly's ferocious reputation arises largely from the fact that a female grizzly will aggressively defend her young. Most attacks are defensive; therefore, if a grizzly bear does actually make contact with you, drop to the ground and play dead. However, do not play dead before contact is imminent, as it may elicit a curious approach from the bear. Leave your pack on and put your arms around the back of your head and neck for protection. The majority of charges are from female grizzlies protecting their young. By playing dead you will neutralize the threat that you represent to the bear's cubs. However, if the attack is prolonged fight back vigorously because the bear may be preying on you.

• If A Black Bear Attacks

If you are being approached or followed by a black bear, aggressively chase the bear away, even if it is a female with young. Black bears have been known to stalk and prey on humans in a few isolated incidents. Black bear attacks are rarely defensive. Females will generally send their cubs up a tree in order to protect them rather than aggressively defend them. If attacked by a black bear fight back vigorously.



• Tell a Ranger

Please report all bear encounters to a ranger. This information is used for management and research on bear-human interaction.

• Status of Bears

Black bears (*Ursus americanus*) occur in many places in North America. Although their population is declining due to poaching and habitat destruction they are currently not threatened. In Denali National Park black bears are reclusive forest residents and are rarely seen.

Grizzly bears, also known as brown bears (*Ursus arctos*), once ranged over most of the northern hemisphere. Over the last few hundred years the grizzly's population has been reduced to a few, widely scattered, and isolated populations. Only two hundred years ago over 100,000 grizzlies roamed the landscape between the west coast of the United States and the Mississippi River. Currently, in the 48 contiguous states the grizzly is a species threatened with extinction; fewer than 600 remain. Alaska and Northern Canada are the grizzly bear's last stronghold. There are few places in the world where grizzly bears are encountered more readily than Denali National Park.